

# Use of the Internet and Sexual Risk Taking Among Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) in Nevada



Northern Nevada  
HIV/AIDS  
Planning Council  
(NNPC)



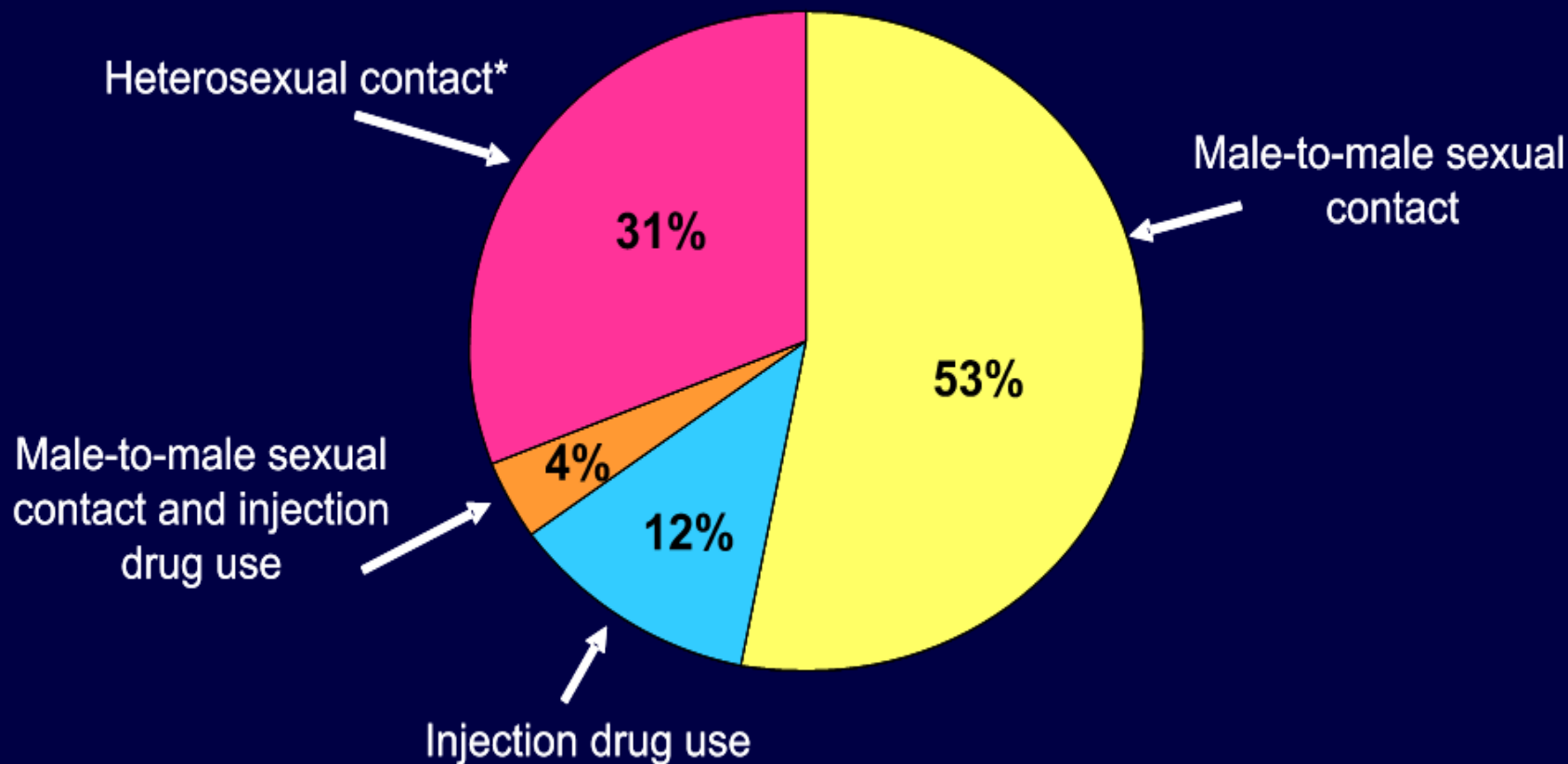
Community Planning Group  
Southern Nevada  
(CPG-SoN)

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# Background

- Men who have sex with men (MSM) continue to be an important sub-population for HIV prevention efforts in the U.S.
- Supplemental Funding was provided through the State Health Division from the CDC (5U62/PS923483-05) to develop a strategic prevention plan for MSM in Nevada.
- The MSM strategic planning process was coordinated with statewide prevention planning activities.

# Estimated Percentage of New HIV Infections by Transmission Category—United States, 2006



\*Heterosexual contact with a person known to have, or to be at risk for, HIV infection.  
Note: Data have been adjusted for reporting delay. Cases without risk factor information were proportionately re-distributed.



# Methods

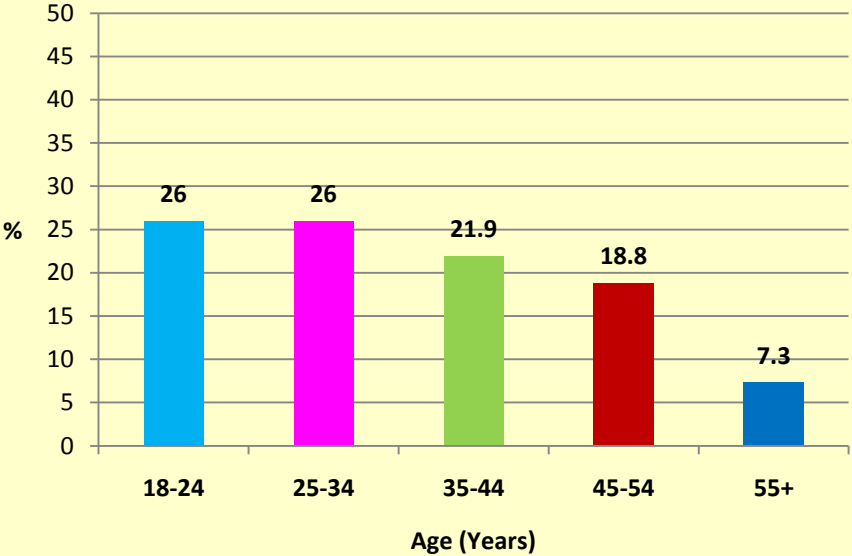
- 12 focus groups conducted with sub-populations of MSM in Northern & Southern NV.

18-24 yrs	African American
25-44 yrs	Latino
45+ yrs	HIV+
- 96 participants completed anonymous risk behavior surveys.
  - Differences in risk behaviors with online partners and offline partners were assessed:
    - Online: Partners met through social networking websites such as Craigslist.com, Manhunt.com & gay.com.
    - Offline: Partners met at bars, clubs, organizations, or through friends

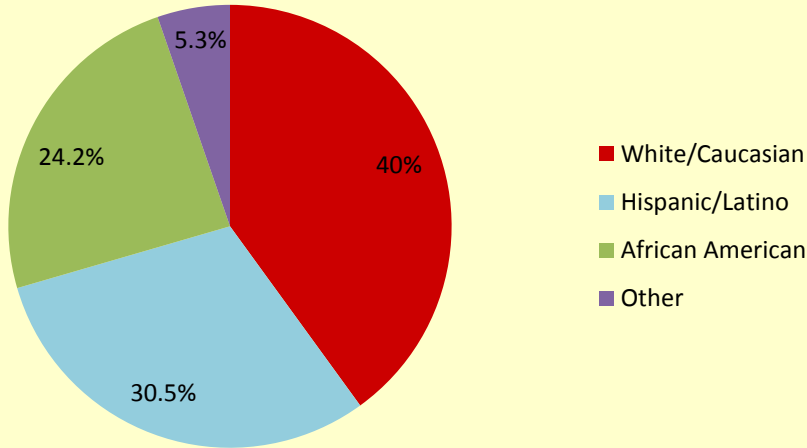
Use of the Internet among MSM:  
A popular way to meet sex partners

# Demographics

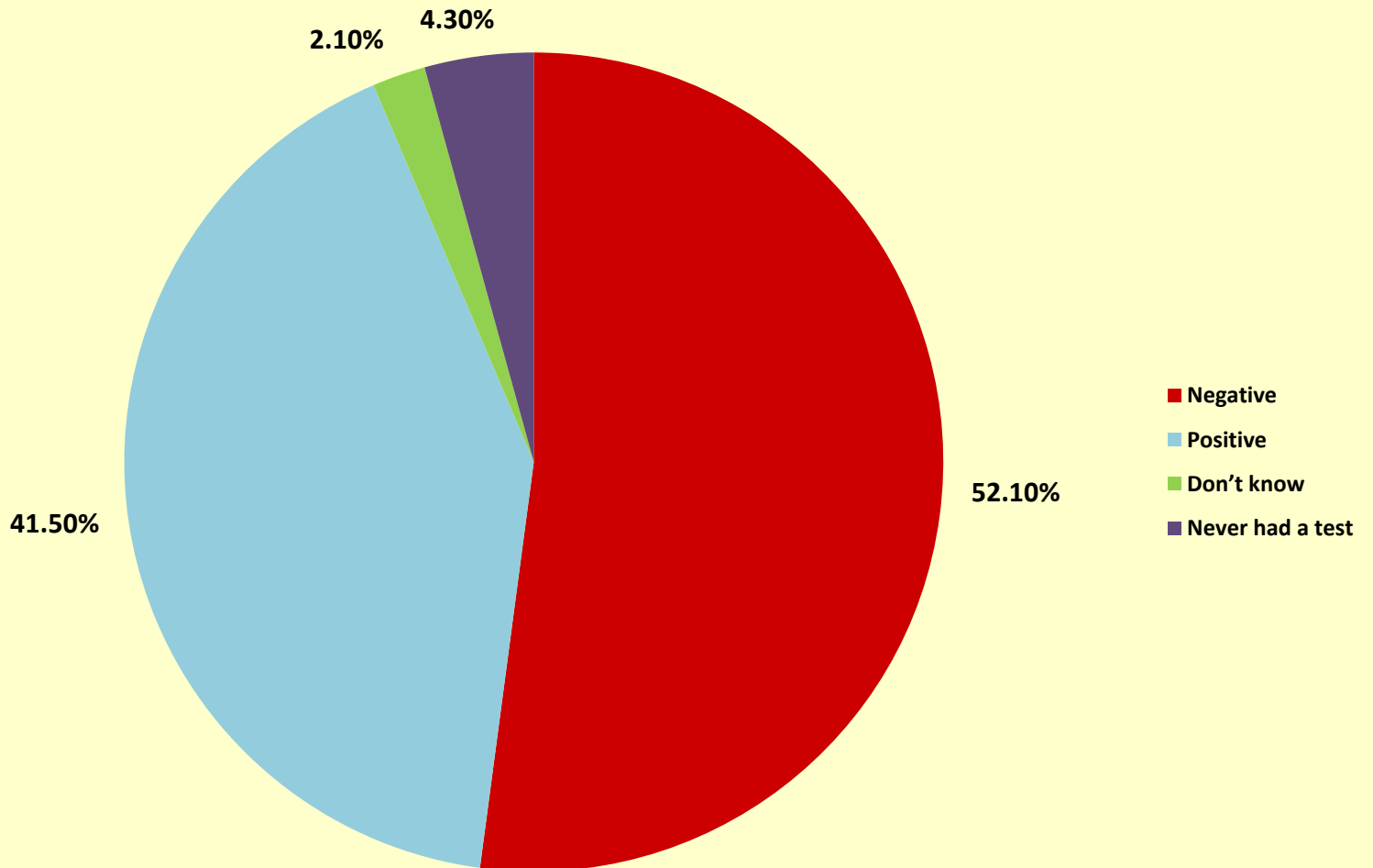
### Age



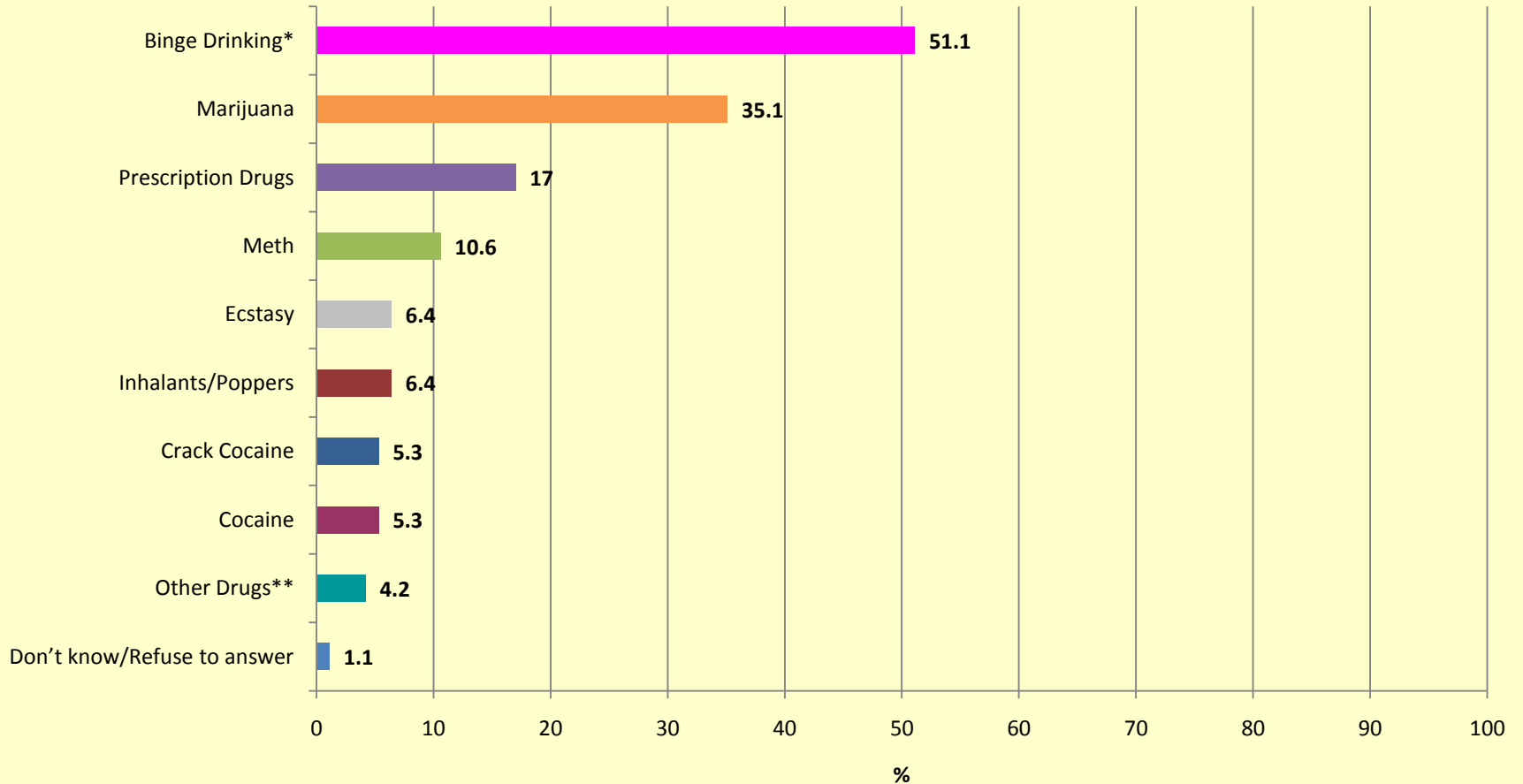
### Race



# HIV-Status



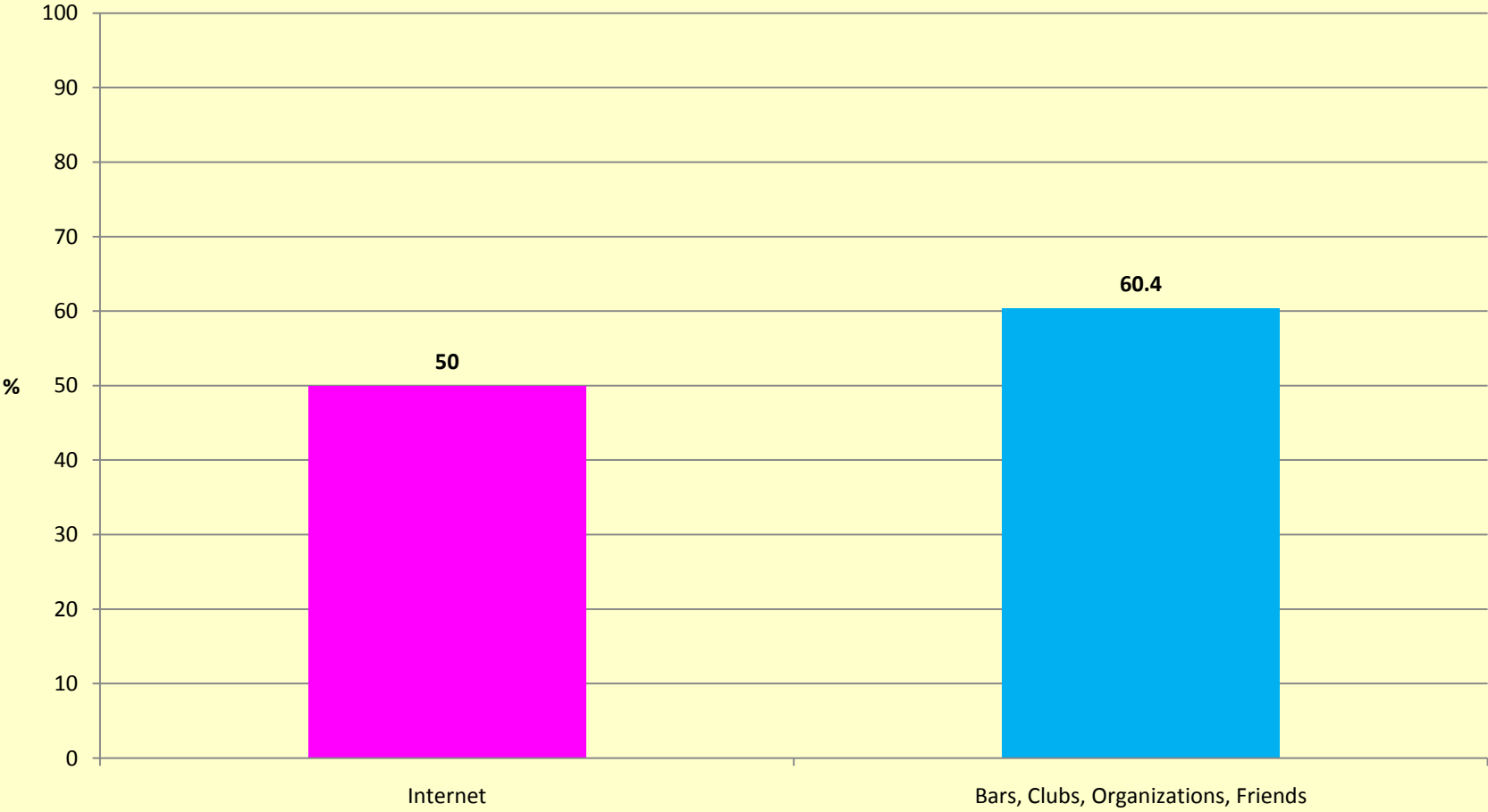
# Substance Use (Past 6 Mos.)



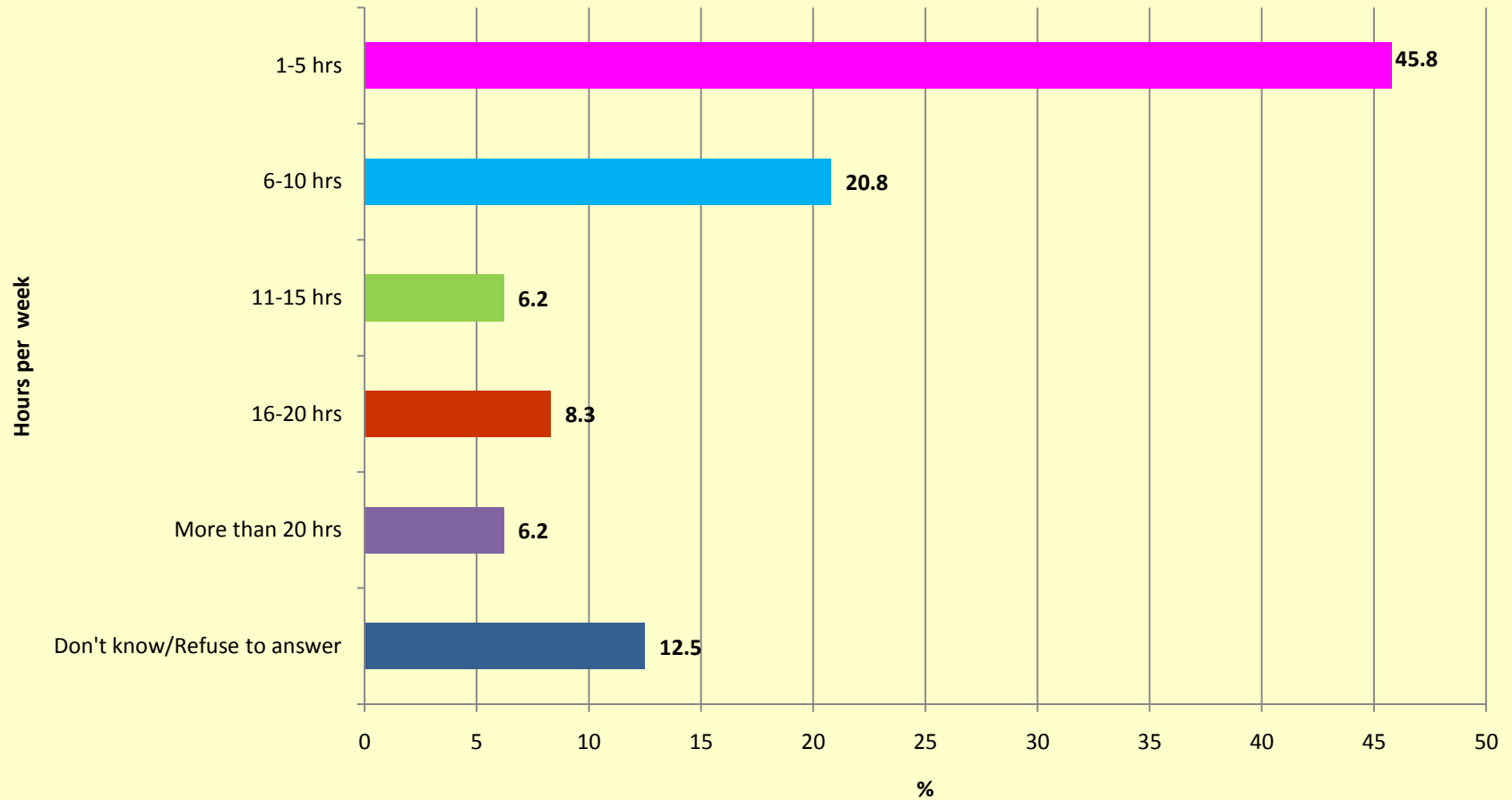
\*Binge Drinking defined as 5 or more drinks in a 2 hour period

\*\*Other Drugs defined as GHB, LSD/Acid/Mushrooms, Heroin, and Ketamine

# Method for Meeting Sex Partners (Past 6 Mos)

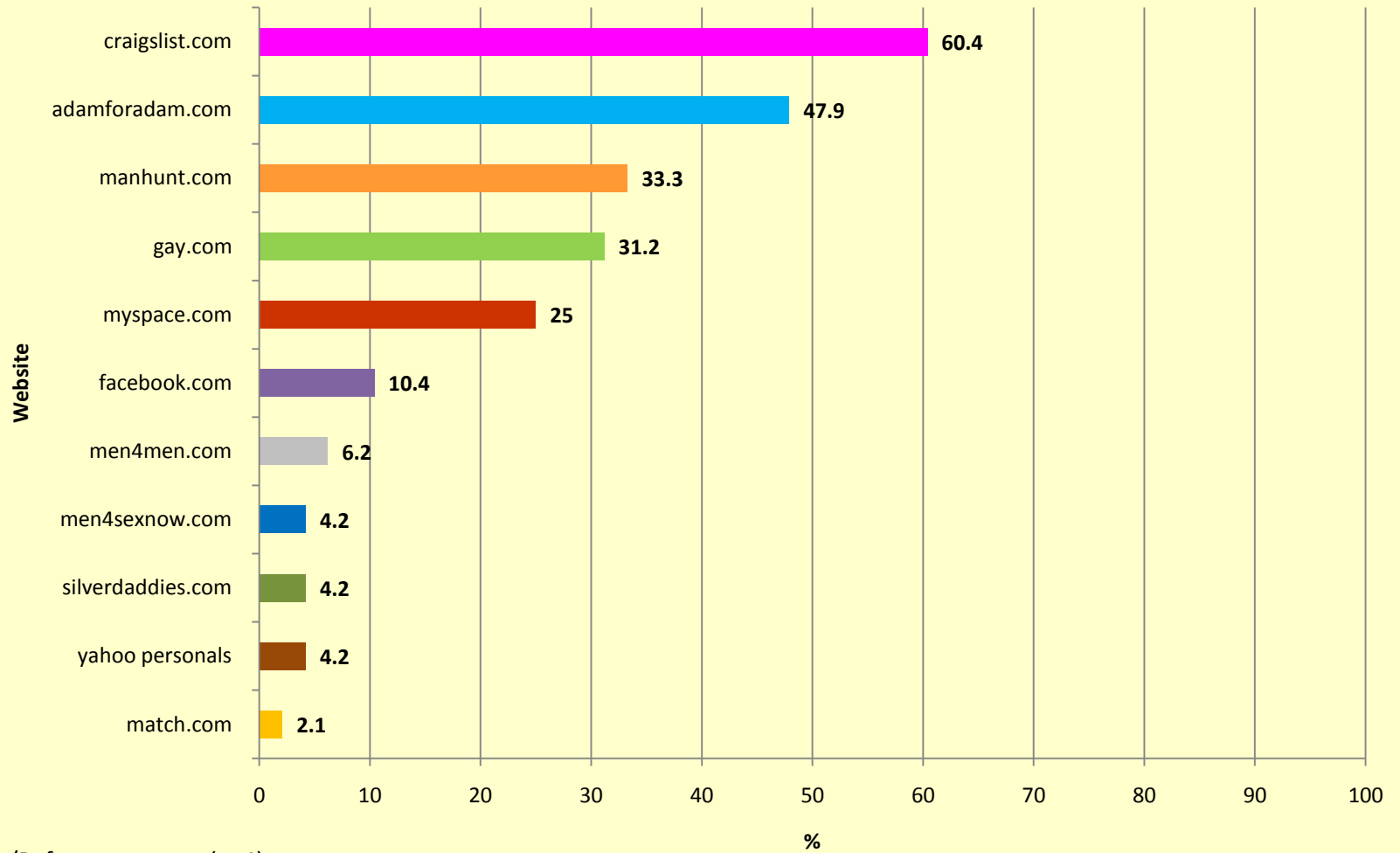


# Hours Online per Week Searching for Sex Partners (Past 6 Mos.)



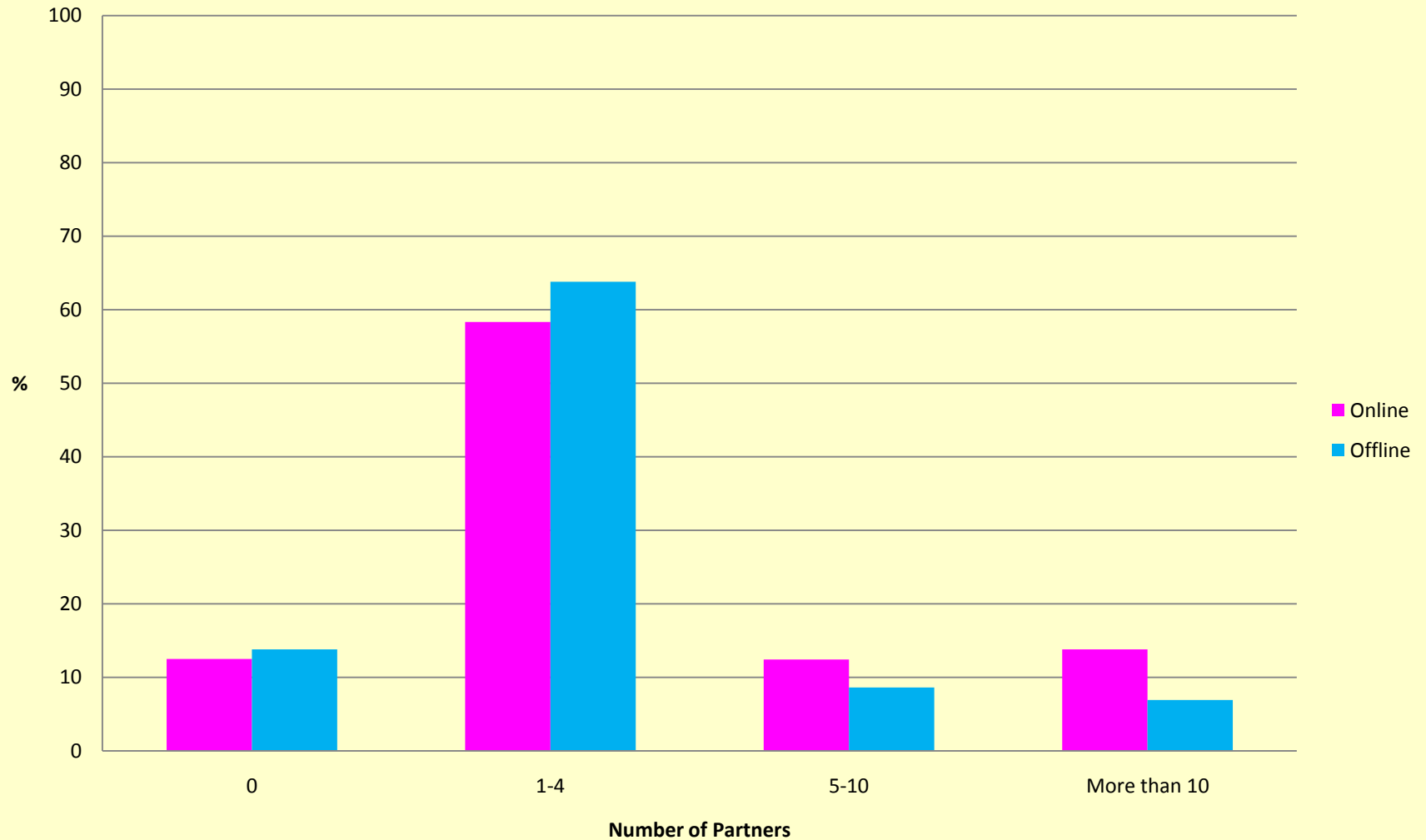
Among those who used the internet to meet a sex partner in the past 6 months, 50% (n=48)

# Websites Used to Search for Partners in Past 6 Months



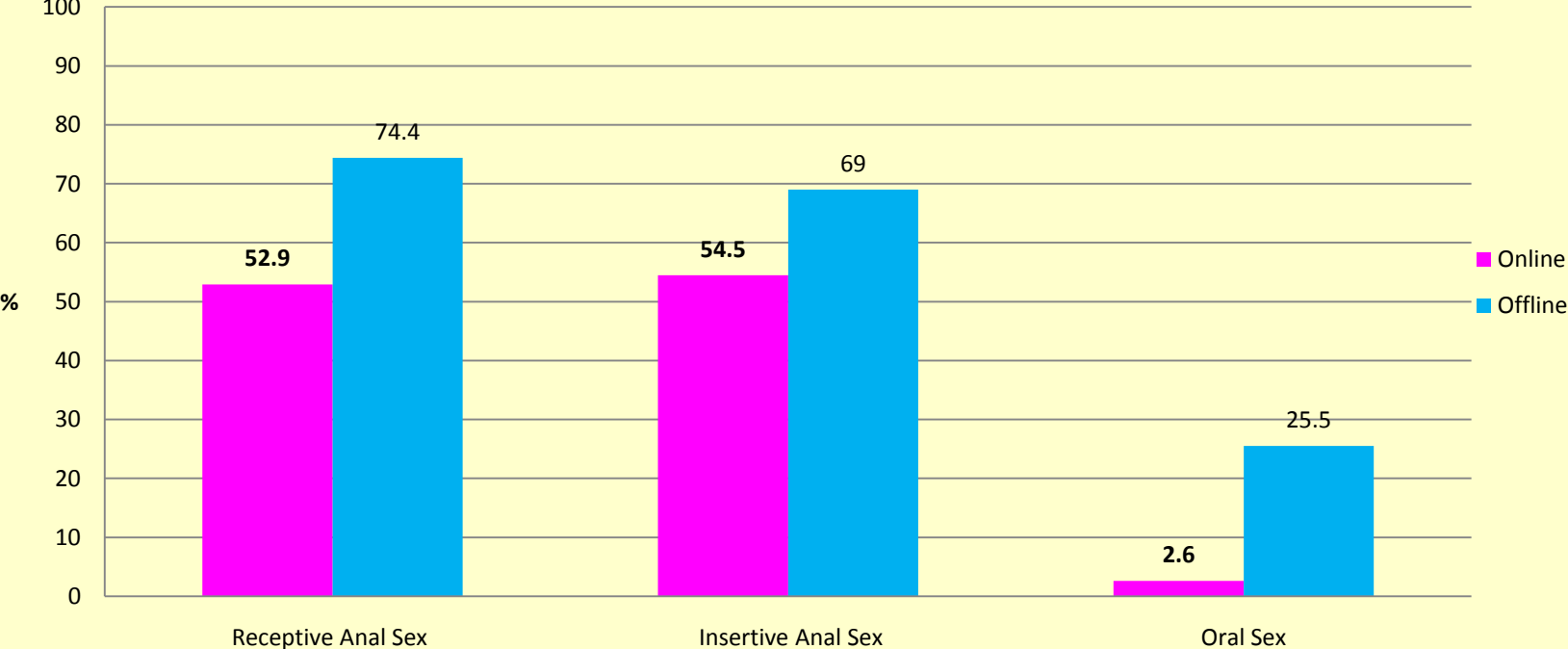
\* Don't know/Refuse to answer (n=4)

# Number of Partners (Past 6 Mos.)



Among those who met partners online and offline

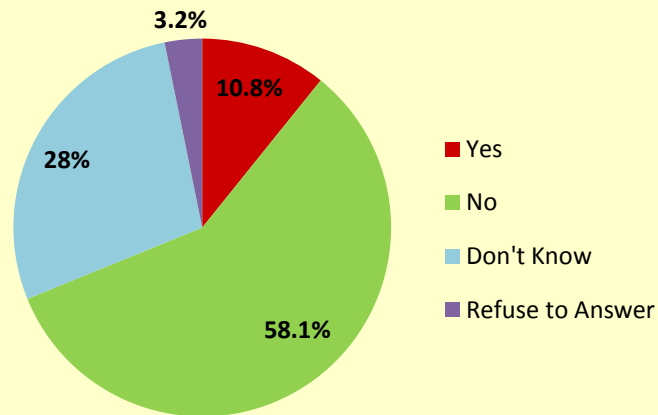
# Consistent Condom Use (Past 6 Mos.)



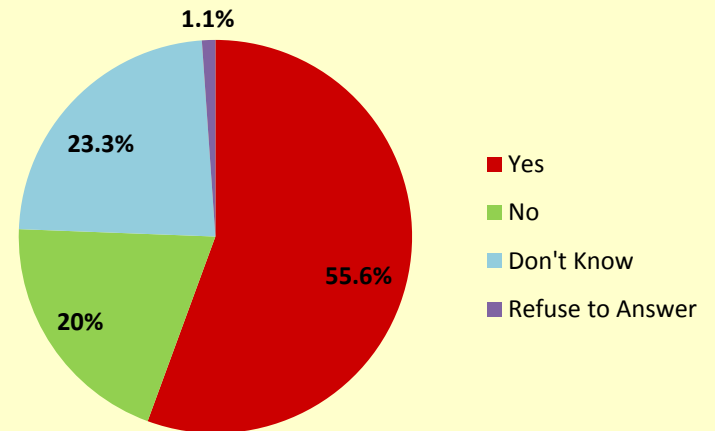
\* Consistent condom use defined as always or almost always using a condom

# Internet and Safe Sex

## Do Internet Sites Have Enough HIV/STD Information?



## Would You Use a Safe Sex Website?



# Focus Group Results

- Easy way to meet multiple sex partners
  - “The Internet is the fastest easiest way to get what you want”
  - “Like let’s say you want to go online and buy a pair of pants. What do you do; look at the pictures, see what you like, and that’s what the internet has done.”
- Lack of condom negotiation
  - You are talking online, but they are not talking about condoms. When you finally meet up, it’s difficult to bring up condoms”
- Anonymity of sexual encounters
  - “The Internet is very anonymous. If you don’t want to identify as gay but you want to have sex with men, I think that’s one of the first places that people go”
  - “Here’s your stats. Here’s my picture. You know, if it looks good then come on over”

# Participant Recommendations

- Entry to the site requires clicking on safe sex acknowledgement
- Display local links for HIV testing and services on the first page of websites
- Set up informative profile on social networking sites and ‘friend’ other MSM
- Have public health professionals respond to “Men Seeking Men” postings
- HIV risk reduction pop-ups that will catch the attention of MSM
- Create twitter profiles that send information about HIV/AIDS
- Include a standard place for HIV status disclosure
- Banner page that gives subtle HIV prevention messages
- Develop sex-positive branding strategies that promotes safe sex